



**October 2009  
Chamber Report  
Board of County Commissioners**

The Chamber was busy during the month of October fulfilling its mission to serve as the Gateway to Sumter County. Efforts to grow membership are ongoing and include a number of areas related to connecting business to community through facilitation of networking, keeping members informed on both issues and chamber events, business advocacy and providing information to the community at large.

- **Chamber Membership** continues to grow. We are pleased to report that we added 27 new members during the month of September.
- **Directory**- Completion of three-year agreement with Heron Publishing for Sumter Directory containing updated information related to Sumter County is under progress and currently in the proof stages. The new directory is expected be published and ready for distribution in the last week of November.
- **Events & Meetings**: A variety of ribbon-cuttings and events were conducted including the Chamber Lunch Exchange featuring a presentation by the Fair Tax Group in the Villages and a First Thursday at the Waterfront Inn. Also included are a variety of other meetings that the chamber oversees including but not limited to: Marketing Committee, Chamber Business Leaders, Ambassadors, Board of Directors, Finance Committee, Events Committee, Leadership Advisory Council. Plans for a new event- Speed Networking which offers an opportunity to increase member networking.
- **Communications**- Copy produced for publication in the following newspapers: Sumter Express, Sumter Times, Daily Commercial and Sumter Shopper. Information provided to Lake-Sumter Style magazine for the new jail (to be included in a special issue.) We continue to send our standard email communications including faxes and email notifications.
- **New Chamber Product** created in partnership with The Daily Commercial-Crossroads of Commerce. The new product will allow business member insertion at a cost of \$50.00 per flyer and delivery of Chamber programming.
- **CD** -A demo CD representing Sumter County is currently being produced in order to prepare for sales of this new chamber product which will serve as a resource for chamber members, economic development and visitors alike.

- **Community Resources-** The Sumter Chamber continues to provide a variety of resources to the community including answering questions from the general public related to the Sumter Community and provision of Relocation packages.
- **Business Lead:** A business lead was generated from out of the area by the Chamber and a meeting coordinated between County, EDC, Chamber and prospects.
- **Leadership Sumter-** Completion of a second year of Leadership Sumter and culminating in the graduation of another group of community leaders who now have a broad based understanding of the Sumter Community at large. Planning is currently underway for a third group of Sumter County Leaders.
- **Workshops & Seminars-** A grant was received from Workforce Central Florida in order to produce a December workshop “Hiring, Training and Retaining Employees.” Speakers were located and contracted, flyers produced and a Marketing plan created. Arrangements to promote through Lake-Sumter Society of Human Resource Managers and the Chamber Products
- **Advocacy:** Chamber Director attended the Legislative Delegation in Sumter County and spoke regarding the two following items on behalf of the Chamber. The Legislative Delegation was encouraged to support and educate their constituents on the following issues that will effect the businesses and the community at large
  - 1) Legislators are encouraged to fix the Charter School anomaly which results in Sumter County residents and businesses paying an additional millage point to support Out-of-County students.
  - 2) Legislators are encouraged to educate constituents on the dangers of Amendment 4 (Hometown Democracy) that will appear on the 2010 ballot and represents a grave threat to Florida’s economic future.

The Chamber continues to be represented at a wide variety of City Commission and Council meetings in an effort to fully understand the efforts of each board, city council and commission in order to be of assistance in facilitating networking while fostering a spirit of cooperation.

Chamber meetings with all five Commissioners concluded in order to better understand their perspective of Sumter County with the object of assisting in the facilitation of networking and achievement of goals and expectations

Submitted by  
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 Executive Director  
 26 October 2009